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BLESSED  
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# SCENES OF JOY AND WOE.

BY EVAN RHYSE.

I am conscious of affecting thoughts  
And dear remembrances, whose presence soothes  
Or elevates the mind, intent to weigh  
The good and evil of our mortal state.

WORDSWORTH.

SCENE FIRST.

## THE BLESSED APPARITION.

LONDON:

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## INTRODUCTION.

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How different are the circumstances of life ; how varied the scenes that are daily occurring on the great stage of human action ! Were the curtain for a moment raised—were the organ of sight rendered capable of taking in a full view of this world, in its outline and *minutiae*, the prospect would be truly overwhelming ! The metropolises of Europe—those great marts of merchandise—those mighty hives of humanity, with their ever-rolling population, driven to and fro like the “restless ocean waters ;” the eastern deserts and wildernesses, with their untrodden sands and pathless woods—an uninhabited world, save by the beasts of prey, whose only employment is to hunt and devour each other ; the gorgeous gardens of the south, precocious of fruit and flowers, and diffuse in beauty, smiling in the light of a brilliant meridian, and canopied with a sky of



unshaded glory ; the freezing realms of the north, with their snowy mountains and icy wastes, where life and beauty are buried under the cold shroud of a perpetual winter ; the calm, silent ocean, smooth, waveless, pictorial, lit by the declining light of a summer evening, with visions of loveliness portrayed on its tranquil bosom ; the tempest-scene in all the fulness of its terrific sublimity ; the dark waters of the deep illumined by the fires of heaven ; the astounding roar of the heavy billows breaking down on the rocky beach, and seeming to be echoed in the clouds by the incessant rolling of the thunder ; the thick foam torn from the breakers' crest and propelled high into the air to meet the descending rain, rushing down in torrents to join its native element. Such would be the objects most likely, at first, to attract our attention, but, on a second survey, scenes of a more minute kind would engage our notice. In one place we should look upon a happy scene of rural festivity—an assemblage of youth and beauty laughing in the pure atmosphere of a summer evening, with eyes sparkling like stars in a moonless sky, their joyful glance speaking of an atmosphere within, bright and unsullied as

the ambient air; in another we should behold the works of depravity and sin, accompanied by an accumulation of attendant miseries—the beings met there, once innocent in look, and possessors of internal blessings which, if improved, might have led them into happiness and truth, have followed the paths of iniquity till every good thought has gradually evaporated from the hardened soil of their evil hearts, to sink like dew-drops on some broken spirit, open and ready to receive them. In this house the rooms are crowded with the mirthful and gay, spending the evening in all manner of festivity, surrounded by every luxury that art can extract from nature, and yet heaving the frequent sigh of discontentment and unsatiated desire: in a neighbouring mansion lies an invalid on a bed of suffering, turning and rolling in search of that rest which is nowhere to be found, and a lonely watcher glides slowly from room to room, whose bent and anxious form is scarcely visible to the dim light which a single taper casts around. Here, in this lovely arbour, where the moonbeams mingle with the shade—a transparent shower!—a young virgin kneels in solitude, absorbed in inward prayer and devotion, while the

conscious glances of her being's immortality emanate from her spirit-lit eye ; there, in yonder gloomy highway lurks the assassin, creeping onward, knife in hand, with eye and ear widely expanded to catch the most distant trace of his prey, while, at the same time, he carries on an inward warfare, a wild inhuman strife, against the redeeming dictates of conscience, whereby the latest accents of that warning voice may be quenched for ever. But the minutiae of this universal scene is endless.

Extensive and wonderful as such a knowledge of the affairs of the external or natural world would undoubtedly be, an insight into those of the internal or spiritual world would be much more so. Were we enabled to view the hearts of men, and provided with a comprehension of the myriad thoughts that are every moment brought into existence, numerous and indefinable as the atoms that glitter in the sunbeam, we should be still more astonished and bewildered than when viewing the mighty drama of the universe.

In the following "scene" or story we have told a tale of external things, but we trust that the

incidents and descriptions there introduced may be such as to correspond to and open up some of the more interior feelings of the mind ; and that, also, in this, or in some of the other scenes that are intended to compose this series, actions may be met with worthy of being imitated in real life, or thoughts suggested such as to elevate the soul above the littleness of mere worldly gratifications into the sphere of spiritual delights, whose source is infinite and inexhaustible. The title, "Scenes of Joy and Woe," which we have chosen for the following papers, is very generic, and admits of every variety of description. As white and black are the two extreme shades of colouring, of which all other hues are but modifications and intermediates, so are joy and woe the two extreme shades in moral feeling, of the mingled elements of which are produced other shades and states of endless variety. Thus there is no restriction in the appellation "scenes of joy and woe," for under that head may be ranged all the various tints and colourings to which human life is subject—the joyful, the melancholy, the ludicrous, the sublime.

It is only necessary to add, that these papers are intended to be published in small volumes

such as the present, and to appear annually or oftener according to the reception of this first "scene," which is merely experimental. In the mean time, I bid the reader farewell.

EVAN RHYSE.

CLIFF-VERDANT, *Dec.*, 1841.

## THE BLESSED APPARITION.

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"Mystery of mysteries,  
Faintly smiling Adeline,  
Scarce of earth, nor all divine,  
Nor unhappy nor at rest."

TENNYSON.

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"'Tis past, and I am once more here. How clearly I remember the day when last I stood on this shore, looking back on a scene of blighted hopes and withered joys, and forward, with something like expectation, to a new world. I have tried that world. I have sojourned in the land of the stranger. I have wandered amid scenes where my heart could find nothing to awaken its sympathies. That interval is past, and I am once more here. There are the same fields on which I have so often gazed in distant time, and even now the summer sunbeams are shining on them, as in vanished days, with the same sad, yet tranquil smile of nature's holy melancholy. There are the same rocks on which I have so



often reclined, listening to the murmuring waters, and weeping and praying in solitude; and there, too, are the same gentle hills on whose green declivities I once sported in all the freshness and fulness of a first and early love. But what, now, have those objects to give me? Only a remembrance; and yet I love them still—only a dim, faint, dream of joys that are gone for ever.”

These words, or rather thoughts, are those of a stranger—a gentleman not yet beyond the term of youth—newly arrived from foreign parts, and about to put up for the present at a village inn, on the shore of one of the Scottish estuaries; and while he is thus employed, we shall take the opportunity of briefly mentioning the peculiar circumstances that attached to him, for the purpose of giving the reader a more lively participation in the scene that follows.

Edward Haldane, (for such was the name of the stranger,) was a being of peculiar feelings and endowments. From very infancy it had been given him to think differently from mankind in general. If, indeed, there were aught of originality or of eccentricity in his character, the circumstances of his

childhood were such as to lead to an early and precocious development of such qualities. In boyhood, Edward had not been permitted to enter any public seminary; the rudiments of his education were received wholly by means of private tuition. He was an only child, and accustomed even from infancy to the society of men. The light of life's morning was poured in on his soul through a medium which gave it the colouring of more advanced day. The sun rose quickly but not brightly,—the morning was clouded, the spring was darkened, as it were, with the mists of autumn; and as the beams of that rising sun, whose course was not to be stayed, struggled to come forth from the ambient gloom, an air of sombreness and of prophetic meaning was shed on every object over which broke the dim light of that mysterious dawn.

Were it not for the revelation of Heaven, what a mystery were man! From the cradle to the grave one mighty enigma! How mysterious, also, every object that attracts his eye, and every feeling that sways his mind, as he travels onward on his irretraceable path—life, love, beauty, what are these? Where is their birth-place, and where their bourne?



We live, and within our own spirit we can feel all joy and all sorrow—we can “weep with those who weep”—we can “rejoice with those who rejoice”—we can lull ourselves to rest in the enjoyment of the present hour, or linger over the memories of the past, or explore on the wings of hope, that prophet of the heart, the wonders of an unrevealed future—we can retire at times from the outward world by which we are in this life surrounded, and seclude ourselves in a world within, which latter is a world of woe or of glory, according to the nature of that foundation, whether it be of sand or of rock, on which we have reared it—we can open our spirits from above, and the soul is filled with the light of heaven, or from beneath, and become recipients of the darkness of hell; all this we can do *as* of ourselves, though not in reality of ourselves; for the power is the gift of the Lord. We love, and thus we doubly live—we rejoice not only in our own being, but also in the being of another—for every blessing we feel ourselves conscious of receiving from the Father of all mercies, we have a blessing to endeavour to bestow on a fellow-creature, we wish to share every enjoyment with the be-

loved one, for then only is the enjoyment full—we desire to see our heart's own, cheered by the same hopes, influenced by the same love, purified by the same holiness which we ourselves have experienced; and if, in the dear one's presence, we speak the poetry of our soul in vain, we deeply grieve, for then we know there is yet a gulf between us; we wish not to be superior to the object of our affection, we wish that object to be superior to us—we carry a perpetual vacuum in our hearts, which that presence alone can fill—we experience an unbounded thirst which yet is fully gratified, so long as there is a kindred spirit to return us smile for smile, an atmosphere of purity for a home, and a God of love whom we are permitted to adore, and in whom we “move and have our being” eternally. We behold, and our gaze is met by the face of beauty—the wonders of the universe are displayed before us, and of those wonders beauty is perhaps the chief—we turn our eyes from the flowers of earth to the stars of heaven, and from the oppressive glory of a summer sky, to the calmness of the pictorial ocean—quickly wanders our gaze from vale to hill, and from hill to vale, till at length it rests on the human

flower, the being created in the image of his Maker, and as we view that being just emerging from budding childhood into full blown glory, there we see a concentration of all loveliness, an image of all love, and in the depth of our wonderment we exclaim—"Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?"

In his religion, too, Edward Haldane differed much from the generality of the professed Christians of his day, and especially from those of his own age. Though he revered his instructors, he did not blindly follow the opinions of others. He thought for himself. He felt there must be something deeper and more spiritual in religion, and in the bible, than is generally believed, and he could not submit his mind to the narrowness of sectarian prejudice. One thing that tended greatly not only to open his mind on religious subjects, but to endue him with an elevated and refined philosophy, was an early perusal of a considerable portion of the writings of the illustrious Swedenborg. The knowledge that a new church was forming in the world, founded on the doctrines those

writings contain, and whose tenets he had often heard spoken against, by persons who did not understand them, had no power to prevent him from studying the works of a superlative scholar, and the most spiritually-minded man the world has ever known. An early insight into the general principles of the science of phrenology, had also much influence in showing him the vast efforts the human mind might be rendered capable of, by a proper cultivation of its various powers.

Haldane's youth was altogether of an uncommon character. Outwardly, indeed, there had not been, till of late years, many unwonted protuberances on his path, but there was that within him which lent a strange colouring to circumstances, which in themselves seemed nothing more than the most ordinary occurrences of life. It may easily be supposed that in such a soul love was omnipotent, and that, when an earthly object was found fitted to call forth a manifestation of that indwelling holiness, all other joys, all other cares, all other interests, would be absorbed in that one passion. In very early youth, Haldane did find such an object, namely, Miss Eliza Medwyn, daughter to Mr. Medwyn of Church-



vale, a rich merchant, who had retired from the fever of mercantile affairs, to enjoy the seclusion of his beautiful domain ; and often through the winding avenues and shady groves of that lovely retreat did Haldane stray with the amiable object of his sincere affection. This intimacy continued for several years, and yet Haldane never ventured to speak of love. The terms of increasing friendship, however, with which the family regarded him, had almost fixed his resolution to make known his feelings, when Miss Medwyn was seized with a severe illness, which terminated in her death.

Haldane followed his first love to the grave, and still his visits to Churchvale were continued. It was now his only consolation to visit the places she had loved, and to be in the company of those who had known the departed. The household at Churchvale consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Medwyn, and Jessie their younger and now their only daughter, who was, as yet, but a child ; one son they had, their first-born, but he, being in the army, was seldom an inmate of the family mansion. Jessie Medwyn was a beautiful child, and long had Haldane loved her with an almost paternal

love. Had Eliza lived and become his wife, Jessie would have dwelt with them and blest them with her pure joy,—till some other flower arose to supply her place !—and sometimes a strange thought passed over Haldane's mind—"Was it possible he could love his own child better?" In one sense, Jessie was indeed his child, and in a sense highly exalted ; she was his spiritual child—he had been a worker under God in the creation of her soul, and to him she owed those peculiar refinements she possessed so abundantly, and which placed her so far above most other children of her own age. There is a spiritual relationship, as well as a natural relationship ; the latter ceases with the present life, but the other is eternal. After Miss Medwyn's death, Haldane's affection for the little Jessie seemed even to increase, and, at the same time, to become somewhat changed in its character. Often while he gazed upon her, the semblance of deep thought became visible in his aspect, and, although none spoke, many there were who wondered how it was possible he could take so much interest in a child. For many days subsequent to that melancholy event which had wrought so

great a change at Churchvale, Haldane and Jessie were incapacitated for those glad sports in which they had been accustomed to share. In time, however, although the departed was never forgotten, they ceased to weep and to sigh, and once more smiled and gamboled in the summer sun; for they knew that Eliza was happy in heaven.

About a year after the departure of Miss Medwyn, Haldane's life was again changed by the death of his only remaining parent, an aged father whose worldly affairs had, of late, become much confused, and, a sequestration taking place immediately subsequent to his decease, his son was left utterly portionless. Edward might have lived long enough at Churchvale, for the Medwyns loved him; but he was young—he wished to do something for himself, and, finally, he determined to seek his fortune on some distant shore. At length the day arrived on which Edward Haldane was to leave his native land—that land round which every past recollection, the sweetest and the saddest, were inseparably wreathed. The Medwyns accompanied him to the place of embarkation, a fine bay, some miles out of port, where the ship lay waiting

for the wind. Jessie was now in her eleventh year, and a very tall girl of her age; she looked sad that day, and seemed to feel her loss, although she spoke not, in the departure of her friend. He had been more than a brother to her—perhaps no intercourse with one so young had ever been so like the intercourse of love. And how felt Haldane? It was the day of his departure from all the dear scenes of his youth, and from that young and beautiful girl who seemed the spirit of the whole. All the departed charms of the lost Eliza, seemed now beginning to revive in Jessie, who bore a remarkable likeness to her, and to become blended with certain additional attractions more wonderful and more inexplicable still; for Jessie Medwyn was indeed a lovely child, replete with that indefinable grace and beatitude which one would suppose too pure and too heavenly ever to fade away. Such outward beauty, however, is but emblematical of the real loveliness of the spirit; and emblems are in time, while realities are in eternity. When they reached the sea-side, a breeze was visible on the water, and the vessel was just preparing to get under weigh. A boat was soon procured to take



Haldane on board, and but one moment remained to bid adieu to his beloved friends—for many years at least, if not for ever. He first shook hands with Mr. and Mrs. Medwyn, and then, coming to Jessie, he said—"Be good, Jessie, and you will be happy; think of me sometimes—I will never forget you"—kissed her, and departed.

Haldane stood on the deck of the ship, and looked once more on his forsaken land. There was a slight shower—Jessie had left the carriage, and was standing, with some other people, beneath the side of a vessel that was there repairing; the sun shone beautifully around her through the sparkling rain. For a moment, Haldane turned round to view the aspect of the heavens. A heavy sound was heard, and a fearful cry. He looked back on the scene of love. The props of the vessel on shore had given way, and many human beings lay mangled beneath its deadly pressure. Jessie had stood next the keel! Haldane did not faint—he could weep; he sought out the berth allotted to him in the ship, and threw himself on the bed in unutterable despair.

"Heavens! have I slept? If I have not

slept, I have at least been for some hours unconscious, for now a faint twilight is shed around, and I know not whether it is night or morning." He lay still in silence, and that melancholy light lingered long, as if it would never change. At length, however, it began to fade, and was soon lost in ambient darkness. So he knew it was night, and not morning, and thus flowed on his melancholy thought. "Oh, earth! what a night? I have left my childhood's home for the first time, and she who was to have been the 'loved regret,' I left behind, and the joy of my returning, is dead, irrecoverably dead, and buried in her own pure life-blood on that dreadful shore.

'Fair form, young spirit, morning-vision fled;'

and art thou really gone, and shall these lone arms no more clasp thee? But I saw her not in death! Grant, O Lord, that I may yet see her upon earth! Thou knowest this prayer is from my heart, and not expressed in words only, therefore I confidently trust thou wilt graciously hear it. All things are possible with thee. I believe, O Lord, that if it were thy will, this joy would yet be reserved for me. But what do I ask? Am I worthy of

such an interposition of thy providence? No. And it is well with Jessie—she is now with her who was once her sister in the flesh, and with all the holy angels in heaven. Oh! could I see her in her glory! But mortal eyes shall never behold such a sight. The real spiritual sight of man is never opened till after the soul has left its earthly tabernacle, except on extraordinary occasions, when the Lord permits this wonder for the sake of his Church on earth."

Thus flowed on his meditations in the gloom of night—his first night at sea! When he called to mind the awful moment when last he beheld his native shores, he could not shed a tear; his feelings were frozen by despair; his heart would not break, and he felt how true it is that "the dreadful inspiration agony kindles, supports nature while it consumes it;" but when his soul went back into the far and beautiful past, and recalled those evenings of placid joy that once were all his own, his heart was lightened for a moment, as if such times might be again; and his tears flowed freely when reflecting on that form and that face once so full of life, and those eyes in which the soul was once so visible.

“Fairer and brighter far to him whose youth they charmed and illumined, than any eyes that shall ever more gaze on the flowers of earth, or the stars of heaven.” But at length exhausted nature sank into repose, and then strange visions flashed across his soul. First, he beheld a scene of indescribable anguish—the father and mother alone on a desolate shore, bending over the cold dust of their once happy child. Next, he imagined that he stood gazing up into heaven, and beheld, in middle air, the spirit of Jessie Medwyn soaring upward, amid a cloud of angels, a glorious being, and yet in the exact form of her material body that was now rotting in the earth, which had once been an emblem, and a beautiful emblem too, of her immortal soul. On raising his eyes still higher, he beheld an atmosphere of light that seemed to increase even to infinity, and as the spirits continued rising, they became more and more irradant, till his weak sight could follow them no further, and light too intense became darkness. Lastly, he found himself in the wooded avenues of Church-vale, and saw Jessie as happy as ever in her own earthly, but beautiful home: she knelt down to pray, and seemed to pronounce, with



deep feeling, these holy words :—" O Lord God my Saviour ! Thee will I praise for evermore.—Amen."

Morning came at last, and the crew of that ship opened their eyes on the western ocean. The wind had sprung up briskly during the night, and the British shores were quickly receding from their view. Haldane went on deck, and beheld that refulgent mass of waters sparkling beneath the splendid beams of the newly risen sun. But to him it was a *dead sea*—his heart gave no response to its animating glory—the dimness of age had come upon him in his youth, for the love of his spirit had no longer a dwelling upon earth. Haldane continued to sit in his heart's solitude, gazing on the vanishing shores and distant mountains, which were coloured solemnly by the hues of the winter sun, and more solemnly still, by the thoughts that were crowding on his mind—the shadows of the irrevocable past. The noise and bustle so general on board ship, affected Haldane little more than the murmuring of the waves that gently washed the vessel's side. He had entered into conversation with no one since he came on board. He took no part in the scene

around him; he was living in a world of his own—a region of intense and absorbing melancholy.

When the sun was set, he went into the cabin and lay down on one of the seats in a fit of deep despondency, but, by and by,

“A change came o’er the spirit of his dream.”

He began to review all the delights of his past life. He felt thankful for them, and believed that He who had given him so much already, would “never leave him nor forsake him,” and that something of joy was yet in store for future years. His thoughts went back to the days of his first love, and he asked himself, “Why should I be so deeply grieved for the loss of Jessie? Was not the death of her sister a still severer stroke?” He had loved the latter as his own bride, and there was no one left to supply her place; but the love of Jessie was a more abstract feeling—a delight, though far higher, such as the heart experiences when a rose of summer is presented before our eyes in all the fulness of its deep mysterious beauty. Her he loved for the sake of her innocent childhood and budding loveliness, and that ineffable and in-

definable something, "not of this world," that floated round her as a sphere of loveliness. This night Haldane took no note of time—changes of state were the only measurement he recognised, so utterly abstracted was his mind from the outward objects of this terrestrial universe; and gradually this distinction became more complete, till at length actual slumber closed the mental sufferings of that too sorrowful night.

The vessel for some weeks proceeded swiftly and safely on her course, but, before reaching her destination, she became a total wreck. Haldane narrowly escaped a watery grave—it was believed he had perished—his name was enrolled in the list of the sufferers—the news quickly reached Britain, and it became known at Churchvale, and many places beside, that Edward Haldane was no more. As for Haldane, late events had quite paralyzed his heart—he had no desire to carry on a correspondence even with the parents of the departed virgins, and thus all communion with his native land totally ceased.

\* \* \* \* \*

And now the wanderer is returned, and the remembrance of the past has not yet faded from his mind. During the six years of his sojourn in that far land, he had risen from poverty to wealth, from obscurity to many honours; but at every new accession, a painful thought pierced his heart. "Gone, are the loved ones my prosperity might have blessed." Often, too, in that far land temptation came upon him in many forms, to bow him to the dust; but he did not grievously err, for with every trial there seemed to mingle, as it were, a voice from his once happy home, whispering—"Remember the past, be holy, and thou shalt yet gaze in joy on the scenes of former days; for there the spirits of the departed still hover, to brighten the hues of thy path, and to shed down blessings unseen, but not unfelt, on thy bruised soul." Strangely, in his case, did time reverse her law, for, instead of fading from him, those remembered joys shone brighter with every passing year. "From *what*," thought he, "is that radiance reflected? What magnet is there in that far away home to which my soul thus strongly gravitates? There are, indeed, the dear places where I have strayed so often with the first, *and with the last*, and these I



*must* see again ; and ——and ——,” scarcely durst he breathe the supposition, “it is possible Jessie yet lives, I saw her not in death—yes, it is possible, the metropolis of the world may yet be reared, where interminable wildernesses now hold sway—that the waters of the wide Atlantic may yet be dashed aside from the channel in which now they roll—that a thousand new worlds, replete with summer glory, may yet come forth from the womb of infinitude—all these are *possible*.” In such a state of mind did Haldane leave the abode of the stranger—in such a state of mind we find him once more on his native soil—and in such a state of mind do we now behold him setting forth, on the very evening of his arrival, when his arrangements had been completed at the inn, to visit his long lost, but never forgotten Churchvale.

It was a lovely walk, and the circumstances in which Haldane was placed rendered it deeply, sadly, unutterably interesting. The brightness of the past, the melancholy of the present, the uncertainty of the future, threw their mingling hues into his soul, producing a strange and unwonted lustre, analogous to

that which nature assumes when the bright atmosphere of a summer evening is darkened by the shadow of the thunder-cloud. He was approaching the central point of the scene of the happiest period of his past existence—shortly it would break on his view in all its tranquil yet magnificent loveliness—but where were now the spirits that once enlightened it, and whose presence laid the master-charm on every inferior manifestation of beauty? In every nook or alley, as he passed along, he found some dear association, some still unfaded recollection of the past, though now darkly saddened, like the aspect of the garlands that still hang around the festive hall when the hour of festivity has passed away. It was a beautiful evening. The pure foliage of early summer was richly illumined by the reflected glory of the western heavens, and the elements were solemnly still. There was no cloud on the horizon save the light wane-cloud, that waved its thin banner in the far west, like a pure symbol of peace and love, and although the sun had already left the eyes of men, the upper air was still clothed with the effulgence of his beams.

As Haldane drew near the summit of that

gentle elevation from which he was once more to behold the mansion of Churchvale, with its adjacent grounds, he lingered a moment to arrange his thoughts, as if he were about to have an interview with some beloved and long lost friend: and as, at length, he stepped across the brow of that hill, and the scene of his former joy came full into view—still so unchanged, still so familiar—his soul was filled with a glorious, yet all indefinite gush of joyous hope, and as he gazed around him he exclaimed—“No, it cannot be—the future is not all a dull blank, an empty void—there is something of happiness yet amid its hidden wonders.” The scene which this elevation affords, is one of great extent, and of much and varied beauty—hill and dale are finely bound together by the undulating woods that are spread along their surface, while on one side a chain of dark lofty mountains, and on the other, that broad majestic estuary form well defined boundaries to the landscape. Churchvale lay at a considerable distance from this point, but the eye of him who now gazed upon the scene, could very easily distinguish it from the other villas that were scattered around. The scene was truly

beautiful; yet to the present beholder it wore an aspect of deep sadness, which all the loveliness of that early summer's twilight could not dissipate. "But," thought he, "as events that while passing seem dark as the clouds of night, often, when past, appear irradiant and glorious in the light of heaven, so may this very melancholy that now hangs so heavily over my path, lead to future benefits, and happiness may yet revisit this broken spirit from a quarter whence it is least expected." Haldane now quickened his pace, and as he proceeded onward to Churchvale, his steps were arrested by the voices of children—a sound which had always been sweet music to his ear, and he could not resist it, even in that hour. The children were within an enclosure, surrounding a small cottage that stood close by the road side; and, listening a few moments, Haldane overheard the following dialogue:—

"Margaret, why are you so very happy?"  
"The angel of the vale has been here, Mary, and you know she makes every body happy; but she said one strange thing to me to-day, that I cannot forget—'You will yet be like me, Margaret,' she said, 'in all save *the woe*



—be good, and you will receive a *great blessing*.” “And did you not know what she meant, Margaret?” “I had my own thoughts—but come in, it is tea-time.” “Tea-time!” “Yes, we have our tea-time *now*, Mary.”

Haldane passed on, but resolved to inquire some other time who was called “the angel of the vale.” When he had left his native country, there was no such name current in the neighbourhood. “Doubtless,” thought he, “it must be some young person, then but a child, who has now become famous for her goodness to the poor, and her deeds of charity.”

As Haldane was meditating on what he had just heard, he was met and accosted by a gentleman, with whom, in former times, he had been very intimate; he was one also to whom he was formerly in the habit of being very communicative on all subjects, excepting the history of his love, for this Haldane had always viewed as too sacred and too holy a subject to be made use of in common conversation. But now when all was over, and there was no longer a being on earth that could be the object of his soul’s affection, he delighted to ease his heart by pouring forth a confession of his long cherished and unfor-

tunate love. And when, by giving an account of his escape from a watery grave, he had fully satisfied his friend that, as for himself, he was still in the body, Haldane proceeded as follows:—"You knew of my intimacy with the Medwyns of Churchvale—you have frequently met me, if not with Miss Medwyn, with her sister, Jessie; and I remember you once expressed surprise at seeing me spend so much of my time in the company of a child. Indeed many people wondered at this, for they could not imagine that, when Miss Medwyn was dead, my affections could be transferred to one so young. Did I love Jessie? Yes, I had always loved that budding flower; and, when Miss Medwyn was no more, she became the sole earthly object of my heart's affection. But do not misunderstand me when I speak of love; had Jessie supplied the place of her sister? No, certainly not; Eliza was a woman, but Jessie was a child. My love for Jessie was the love of the beauty of youth and innocence, and peace for its own sake, and, at length, I began to spiritualize that love, viewing Jessie as the emblem of goodness; and the more intensely I loved her, my mind was the far-

ther weaned from evil, and the less open to temptation. You cannot imagine how strong a feeling that love became. I always liked little girls, and Jessie was the one I saw oftenest, and knew best. I felt, at this time, that I could not have married, were the fairest and richest of the daughters of men to love me. My whole heart was Jessie's, and to marry without love would be sinful. Single, therefore, I was forced to remain; I could not marry Jessie, I could not love another. Did my love for the departed not still endure? Yes, but it was now the love of a mortal for an immortal—the love of a man upon earth for an angel in heaven. It seemed unaccountable even to myself, and you will scarcely credit it, that the love I felt for that child became at length the most intense I had ever experienced, producing in my heart alternate feelings of pain and delight that were almost insufferable. Ineffable joys are sometimes permitted to visit us on earth, to let us know we are more than mortal—that we are recipients of eternal glory, and have a soul fitted for eternity; and such were the feelings that pure love often inspired. My love for Jessie was known only to myself; at least, it

had never been revealed in words. I knew no one could understand it, and I could not have borne to hear it ridiculed. I have not found any thing in the realms of fiction or of poetry descriptive of feelings in the least degree approaching those I experienced at that time, except the address to Ianthe, in the dedication of 'Childe Harold;' and especially the following passage:—

'Oh! let that eye which, wild as the Gazelle's,  
Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,  
Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,  
Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny  
That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh.  
Could I to thee be ever more than friend:  
This much, dear maid, accord, nor question why  
To one so young my strain I would commend,  
But bid me with my wreath one matchless lily blend.'

"Jessie Medwyn was a strange child. In some things she was indeed a child, but in others a woman—and a woman too of more than ordinary endowments. With Jessie I could carry on a more intelligent conversation, than with almost any young lady I then knew. This was not prejudice—the fact was certain—it was self-evident. Her observation was acute, and, although she could know nothing in those early years of the power of the affec-



tions of the heart, well she knew I loved her better than, at least, any other child. It was partly this knowledge that made her so careful against using freedoms with me. Children in general use more than ordinary freedom with those who love them, but Jessie received the attentions I showed her, with as much seeming coldness, as if she were a young lady fit to be a bride. I could not bear her stiffness, I wished her to be free and unsophisticated as a child, and for this end I was obliged to be very careful how I behaved towards her, and especially in company, frequently disguising my affection for her altogether, and endeavouring to pay more attention to other young ones who chanced to be present. She often addressed her discourse to me, and made free with me, when I showed her least attention, and I believed that she secretly liked my company, for I often succeeded in engaging her interest in conversation. I said that Jessie had ceased to weep for her sister, and that all her former liveliness had returned; but it was only sometimes so,—occasionally recollections of the departed would come powerfully over her young and tender heart. Her life seemed a series of alternate light and

shade, sometimes brightening into the sunshine of open day, and sometimes deepening into the hues of descending night. Jessie had a feeling heart to shed tears for her loss, but she had also religion to waft them away again with the smiles of christian hope. I now saw more of Jessie than I had seen at any former period. We became so very intimate, and were so often together, while living in the same house. As I said before, Jessie was naturally of so very modest and retiring a disposition, that it was with great difficulty I could prevail on her, at any time, to use that degree of freedom with me, which one so intimate in the family might have expected from so young a girl. But this disposition of hers was certainly calculated to increase my love, and every successful attempt I made to draw her out, yielded me deep delight.

“The happy work to which my leisure hours were devoted during that summer, and especially while residing at Churchvale, was the improvement of that dear child’s mind,—the creation of her soul. For man has the power of creating souls,—that is, of bending the spirit by influences into the image of its Maker; but when man is engaged in this

holy work, it is not man that works, but the Spirit of God, which is in him. Thus when an earthly father instructs his children, he represents the Lord, from whom cometh all knowledge, and ought to be held in reverence, in consequence of such representation. And how highly is the Christian rewarded, when he beholds the fruit of his labours beginning to appear—the glorious fruit of the spirit!—and sees when his task is done,—

‘How much holier beauty now  
Lights the young human being’s brow.’

“It was indeed a great joy to me to be Jessie Medwyn’s teacher, and especially when, at length, I saw she began to pay attention to my instructions. I endeavoured to instil into her all sorts of information suited to her young mind, but principally to touch her heart with ‘the beauty of holiness.’ For this end I guarded every influence, trying to make all things contributory to my purpose. People, in general, are not sufficiently careful how they act and speak in the presence of children; they seem not to be aware that the growing mind is easily impressed, and that what is imbibed in early youth, it is difficult in after years to eradicate. In the evenings,

Jessie and I often amused ourselves for hours by reading some interesting book, which I always took care should be of such a quality as to impress the heart with feelings of goodness and of love. At other times, we played at some little game sufficiently amusing for a girl of Jessie's years, and her presence was enough for me. There is a something of loveliness in the child, we in vain look for in the woman. This is according to nature, and cannot be denied. There is a beauty also in early morning, we seek in vain to find amid the brightness of the most dazzling noon. The beauty of morning is a pensive beauty, so also is the love of a child a melancholy love. Often in days that were not then come, but that now are long since passed away, have I sat gazing in intense thoughtlessness on that lovely little girl, whose features were agreeable in the extreme, and whose form surpassed in elegance any I have ever beheld, even until this day. When I saw her dressed in white garments, and smiling in her joy, and dancing to the happy music, I felt my own soul overflowing with the delights of childhood, and yet I could not help sighing to behold so much beauty, youth, and inno-



cence in such a world!—to behold the early love of that young heart now so pure and happy, but yet to be clouded and darkened, and blighted, by the evils of a fallen world—evils of which that dear one was as yet so unconscious. Children, besides, are to my mind, the very personifiers of all beauty: emblems are they of the purity, and simplicity, and peacefulness of regenerate spirits, and of the eternal youth of glorified saints in heaven.”

It is most assuredly certain that Haldane, in the present instance, fell into the very common error of talking at length on subjects more fitted to please the speaker than the hearer, and in which the former feels so deeply interested, as to overlook the possibility of it being otherwise with the individual whom he addresses. Many of the feelings which Haldane expressed on this occasion, were utterly lost on his friend, who had never been placed in similar circumstances, or experienced feelings in the slightest degree resembling those that Haldane described. When the mind of an imaginative man is opened to the sad conviction that his very finest ideas are those that are least understood, and least sympathized with in the world, then



does he begin to feel his lonely and isolated condition, and to sink beneath a heavy melancholy, the darkest and the deepest, because the most hopeless of any alleviation. Haldane experienced some such feeling when he observed the listlessness of his friend, which tended to bring more powerfully over his mind, the recollection of that great blessing he had once enjoyed,—the companionship of a congenial spirit that could feel as he felt, and with whom love was the interpreter of every word and of every look.

Before parting with his former companion, Haldane inquired if he knew anything regarding the family at Churchvale. He was answered in the negative, which might have been expected, as his friend moved in a different circle of society, and, on inquiring further, to his great surprise he learned that this person had not even heard of the dreadful accident that occurred to Miss Jessie Medwyn, till that very hour.

As Haldane approached Churchvale, the objects that surrounded him became more and more familiar, and teeming with lessons from the past; and, as the fading day smiled its last smile of love on the verge of the western

horizon, that lovely mansion, once his heart's home, stood openly before him, being divided only from the place where he stood, by the extensive burying-ground that surrounded the parish church. It was in that burying ground the body of Miss Medwyn had been deposited, and, the gates being open, Haldane felt a strong desire to visit her grave once more, and perhaps to find beside it *another little grave* he had not as yet beheld. The ground was very extensive, and laid out into various portions, by rows of tall poplar trees, which, by moonlight, gave the scene a very romantic and shadowy appearance. For some time he hesitated, but at length conquering that natural awe which the character of the place inspired, he entered, and proceeded along the western walk, which passes close by the church, the walls of which are completely covered by the tall trees and spreading ivy that cling around them. In a far corner of the churchyard, he discerned some men with lights, evidently employed in placing a safe round a newly made grave, and avoiding their notice, he turned to the east by a narrow path that led in the direction of Churchvale, and towards the place where was the grave

of Miss Medwyn. Haldane had now some difficulty in finding that spot, which in the vanished days he had so frequently visited. The place was not so familiar to him as it had once been, for the hand of the sexton had been heavy on the soil since his departure, and the appearance of the ground was much changed.

He remembered, however, that there used to be a small aperture in the hedge, which, on that side, formed the only division between the churchyard and the grounds of Churchvale, through which he and Jessie had often passed, to visit Miss Medwyn's grave. This he easily found by walking along, close by the side of the hedge. It was wider than formerly, as if there was still some one who paid the accustomed duty to the departed, and Haldane was not disappointed in finding the mark of footsteps to guide him towards that spot he so anxiously desired to behold. As he was about to leave this spot and proceed to Miss Medwyn's grave, he observed a small silk bag, hanging on the branch of a tree that grew on the other side of the fence. He could not resist the impulse of the moment—he opened it,—and the first thing he

found was a letter addressed to Miss Jessie Medwyn. He recognised his own hand,—it was a letter he had left enclosed in a small parcel of books he gave to Jessie, on the morning of his departure, at the same time making her promise not to open it till after sunset that evening—a sunset she never saw. He opened it, and its contents were like a voice from the deceased joys of his own soul:—

“MY DEAR JESSIE,—By the time you open this letter and look at the little presents I have left for you, I shall have sailed from the shores of this beautiful land, to return not again for many, many days. You will sit in that happy parlour, on winter evenings, and hear the wind moaning and howling as it passeth by the window, but the friend who, in his latest rambles, could not pass Church-vale unvisited, will come there no longer. You will see another summer brighten the earth, and fill your own little garden with the loveliest flowers, but he will not come even then, and perhaps—never. Be not, in the least, surprised at receiving this letter, —I could not go away without writing to the friends who are dear to me, and you, Jessie,



are one of them. You must have known that I liked you, or how did I come so often to see you? But I will now tell you what I never told you before,—that since the death of Eliza I have loved you, Jessie, far better than all the ladies you ever saw me walking or conversing with. I loved you, Jessie, when I was with you every day—I will love you still in absence; yet, although I tell you so, I do not expect that you will be very sorry because I am away; but I think you will not entirely forget him who used to play with you, and walk with you, and dance with you, and read with you, and who lifted you out of that cold deep water, where you were adrowning, to enjoy life a little longer, and to survive the blossoms of many another summer. Young as you are, Jessie, you must have observed that I was very happy when you were with me—perhaps you knew it all better than I thought!—there are days and nights you and I have spent together that I never can forget. Do you mind the sunny summer day, when we sat together in the carriage for so many hours, on the way to the seat of ——? or that day when we played on the beach,



and stood still in silence, when we heard the voice of the distant thunder? In the days that are passed we were often very happy ; one thing alone makes me sorrowful,—it is, that we spoke so seldom on religious subjects. By ‘religious subjects’ I do not mean those deep points in the divine science of theology, which transcend human reason, and are too often made the subjects of unhallowed controversy ; I am sorry only that we were not good enough to speak oftener of the great love of Him who giveth us all things, and to forget him seldomer, amid that happiness and peace which He himself bestowed. He, Jessie, made this beautiful world, and the glorious sun that lights the universe, and the lovely moon you see so often from the window of your little bed-room, and whose pure beams shine around you, while you say your evening prayer—the prayer Eliza taught you—she who loved you so well on earth, and who thinks on you still in her glorious heaven. He made also that little star, by the pale moon’s side, and all the other stars you tried one evening in vain to count. He made our own bodies, and gave us our happy being, yet we often sin against Him. And He for-

gives us, and we sin again. He gives us every joy, and every moment of peace. He it is that makes me to love you so well. He knows that I love you. I pray to Him for you; and if you turn not away from Him, He will bless you, and make you happy for ever. Oh! who would not love so good and so merciful a God! who not only hears us when we cry unto Him, but who came into our own world, to save us! In loving Him alone there is joy. Sin is misery. 'There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked,' but 'the righteous shall shine as the sun in the firmament of heaven.'

"Farewell, Jessie! I shall never see my little girl more. By the time I return, you will be a woman,—perhaps, the bride of some happy favoured lover. But fare thee well! If I live, I will see you again; and if you are happy, Jessie, I shall be happy too.—Farewell.

"Ever your sincere and affectionate friend,

"EDWARD HALDANE."

*"I shall never see my little girl more."*  
When I wrote these words, little did I know how soon and how literally the prophecy they

contain was to be fulfilled. But how comes it, that my letter has been so carefully preserved? and why is it thus carried about still, as if some one had but now been perusing it? Doubtless the parents will preserve it for their child's sake, and perhaps, too, for the sake of its author, whom they believe to be long since departed to the world of spirits, and, unknowingly, they have left it here, it may be not an hour ago, while taking their evening walk beneath the shade of those spreading trees. But that pretty little satin bag! it looks not like an article likely to be found in the possession of an old lady. Oh! what are those feelings that thus stir within me? What is the cause of those throbbings of my heart I have no power to suppress? More insufferable than the saddest certainty are those faint glimmerings of hope, for they tell us that something may yet remain for us to suffer—the extirpation of the last lingering ray of comfort from the already dark and lonely spirit. One thing, however, is now almost certain—the mansion of Churchvale has not passed into the hands of strangers. I shall this very night rest once more beneath that dear roof; some members of the family are still

here to receive me—how little do they look for such a guest?" Thus meditating, Haldane replaced the bag, with the letter, on the branch of the tree, and turned back into the churchyard in search of Miss Medwyn's grave.

After wandering about for some time in fruitless search, and scraping the turf from many an ancient tombstone—the only memorials left of beings once the lords of earth—the moonlight revealed the words—

"TO THE MEMORY OF ELIZA MEDWYN,  
WHO DIED SEPTEMBER, 18—,  
IN THE NINETEENTH YEAR OF HER AGE."

Having found this inscription, which he had often before read, he began, with a beating heart, to look about for that other inscription he was now to behold for the first time. Many a new memorial stone had been reared in that vicinity since Haldane had last visited Miss Medwyn's grave, and he now proceeded to the task of deciphering their brief, but comprehensive histories. The first he succeeded in rendering intelligible, contained the following :—

"TO THE MEMORY OF CAPTAIN JOHN MEDWYN,  
WHO DIED AT CHURCHVALE,  
IN THE TWENTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF HIS AGE."



"Thus then," thought he, "the friends of my youth are childless—not one of that promising family remains to bless them in their old age." It was some time before he was able to proceed in his sad occupation. Not that he felt so deeply for their departed son, he had seen so little of him—they had never been intimate—but he did feel deeply for those that were left behind. And what were his feelings when he had cleared the turf from another monument, and read the words?—

"TO THE MEMORY OF MR. MEDWYN OF CHURCHVALE,  
WHO DIED DECEMBER, 18—,  
AGED FIFTY-FIVE YEARS."

"Are they all departed—is the house desolate, or gone after all into the hands of strangers—is there not one left to receive me once more into my heart's home, and into whose ear I could pour forth a declaration of my love for the departed?" He looked towards Churchvale. It was visible between the trees. In one window there was light. "This then is the lonely chamber of the childless widow." In the depths of such thoughts Haldane stood motionless and long, and observed not that the lights were departed from the opposite side of the churchyard, and the



gates were shut. There were yet other two graves close at hand ; he examined them, but, to his surprise, they bore the names of persons he had never known. " Was it possible—did Jessie yet live ?" The thought sent a strange thrill over his frame, but at that instant, low in the grass, and close by the side of Miss Medwyn's grave, his eye caught sight of a little humble monument he had not before observed. Quickly he tore away the weeds on all sides, for he could no longer bear suspense. The moon shone full on the naked marble—it bore no inscription. " This, then," thought he, " is Jessie's grave ? The grief of her parents has been overpowering—they have been unable to attend to their sad duty, and thus the lettering of the headstone has been neglected." Haldane was strangely situated. Rushing thoughts came down upon his soul. He seated himself on that end of Miss Medwyn's grave which was nearest to the little simple silent monument that rose over the remains of Jessie, and indulged in deep reflection. It was, indeed, a remarkable situation ; a sad and solemn picture of the mutability of life lay before him. Grave after grave succeeded each other in

close vicinity, over that wide field, till in the distance they seemed but as one continuous undivided pavement, on which the moon shone down with a tranquil and a smiling ray, as if there were nothing sorrowful in death ! Yet beneath those moonlit flags, lay the ashes of many a form of comeliness and beauty, that once walked the earth in joy, now scarcely distinguishable from the clod that covered them. But while gazing on the dwellings of perishable mortality, and reflecting on the world of corruption that lay beneath his feet, objects of glory were, at the same moment, presented before him, which made the feelings of that hour still more inexplicable. The moon and stars shone purely and brightly in the lovely heaven, without a single speck to bedim their unsullied aspects. " Surely," thought he, " they are heralds of the immortality of the soul—surely they proclaim in living language that *there is indeed another state*, in which man shall enjoy the delights of love, and of his higher nature, for ever and ever. Yes ! there is a spiritual universe, as well as a natural universe, although of the former we can know nothing in our present state, but what we are taught by emblems ;

and this is much, if we were spiritually-minded-enough to receive such instruction. The natural world in one complex is but a mighty emblem of that which is spiritual ; its single objects are emblems of spiritual things ; and our poor perishable mortal frames are emblems of our spiritual bodies that live for ever."

From these sublime aspirations his thoughts emerged once more to the circumstances of his past life, and to those two lonely beings, in whose every joys and every sorrows he once participated, and thus flowed on the current of his reverie :—" Even at this moment, I see in the distance some of those scenes that were once so dear to me, and that are dear to me still, although the nature of my love is changed. Methinks I see Eliza standing before me, as once I saw her, in all the freshness of early youth. How graceful—how motionless—how silent—gazing with an eye of love on the splendid scenery of summer, until, clasping her hands, and exclaiming, ' Oh, how lovely ! ' the soul glorified its earthly image, casting around her form a shade of immortality. As Byron says—

' Methinks a being that is beautiful  
Becometh more so when it looks on beauty.'

And as I gazed on that graceful form and spiritual aspect, and beheld that full dark eye drink in the ambient loveliness, my soul was filled with a ray of heavenly love that has never been extinguished. For even in that far day I felt something of that exalted love which is now fixed in my heart for ever—that love which looks for its fulness into another world, and knows that all earthly gratification of its desires is but emblematical, and delightful, pure, and holy, only in so far as it corresponds to spiritual conjunction—the consociation of congenial spirits—a love—a conjunction, both natural and spiritual (given only to such as belong to the Church of Christ in sincerity and truth) which has a correspondence even with the highest and holiest of all things—the marriage of good and truth in the human soul, and the union of the Lord himself with his eternal Church. But that ray of heavenly love—the communication of the soul with its eternal home, was too bright for earth. Clouds arose on its lustre. The mildew of earthly care, and the storms of passion bedimmed, and at times eradicated its beauty. This was, however, only in appearance, for that light, once implanted in the soul, can



never die, but, like the moon in heaven, it floats in an atmosphere far removed from the dark clouds that seem to gather around it, and is only obscured, for a time, by the intervening gloom. And, like that bright orb, this love will again shine forth, scattering every obstacle that impedes its path, and watering the soul from the fountains of purest joy. Such love is the gift of infinitude, and I feel how unworthy I was, and still am, of the unspeakable treasure."

As Haldane reclined on that silent grave, his thoughts became gradually more visionary and absorbing. The place was very solitary, and there was no sound to disturb his reverie, or break the current of his imagination, that flowed, stream-like, through many a devious track. He thought of all those sweet days of sunny joy that were never to return—when he was not alone on his earthly pilgrimage—when bright spirits were with him on the way; but he felt it to be enough that such joys had once been, for their remembrance, like the redness of an everlasting dawn, still glowed before him. He believed besides, that those dear ones, whose hands he had often pressed in his, and whose beautiful



forms he had embraced with his mortal arms, would yet be his companions in heaven; for even on earth his soul and theirs had discovered their congeniality, and been partakers in the same love and the same faith. And now he fancied that he beheld that very home where the departed already were, and where he hoped yet to come. But it is only by earthly images the imagination can portray the spiritual kingdom. He conjured up every object that could be supposed to add grandeur and beauty to a terrestrial paradise, and there, half-hidden in a tumult of glorious clouds, on which they reclined as they floated along, he beheld Eliza and Jessie, clothed in white garments, clinging to each other in a fond embrace, and singing, as he imagined them, in the words of the holy Mrs. Hemans—

*"We have loved with earth's excess—  
Past is now that weariness!  
We have known the dreamer's woes—  
All is now one bright repose!"*

Such a transport of thought could not be long supported, and Haldane's thoughts once more reverted to the real, but yet joyful circumstances of his past life.

The law of association was strongly developed in Haldane's mind, and now, while seated in this lonely spot, with the scenes of former joy dimly visible before him, thoughts and visions of his past life came down full and freely on his soul. His meditations were chiefly concerning the circumstances that occurred during a week's residence he enjoyed at Churchvale immediately before his departure from home. The note-book of former days was with him even now—he opened it, and his eye fell on the following passages of the history of that far time:—

“On the third day of my residence at Churchvale, some ladies came to tea, and it was proposed we should go to a grand musical entertainment to be given in town that evening. It was a beautiful sunny evening, and I anticipated more pleasure from the drive along that lovely road than from the performance itself. I was not disappointed in that expectation, for Jessie sat next me in the carriage. I put my arm round her waist, and, that night, she did not seek to remove it, but sat beautifully in my arms, and carried on a lively conversation with me all the way. It was a joyful and a holy hour. All things

around us were pure, serene, and beautiful. I saw the young and lovely being I held in my arms gazing with delighted eyes on the scene. I was very happy, and I almost dreamed myself into the belief that I should sin no more. The music was powerfully grand, and Jessie's bent head and dewy eye told me it had found an entrance into her heart. While some of the young ladies who were with us laughed and prattled in a most senseless manner, Jessie listened with deep attention, and sometimes, when any thing peculiarly beautiful struck her ears, she would turn to her father or mother, or to me, and say—'Is not that very beautiful, just those few strains?' In returning, Jessie seated herself beside me of her own accord, and I encircled my arm once more round her slender form, and held her hand in mine, while she talked to me in the joyful tone of happy childhood. No cloud bedimmed that evening's beauty, and I retired to rest in the blessedness of a peaceful and a loving heart.

"Next evening circumstances occurred of a very different character, and of far more powerful influence. At tea-time, Jessie retired very early from table, and on inquiring

for her a short time afterwards, I was informed she had gone away with some boys and girls to fish on a loch that lay up among the hills. I felt hurt at her thus leaving me, but I knew it would be unjust to blame her, for how could I expect that she would forsake her young companions for the company of one so much older than herself? Her mother said she went often to play on the banks of that loch, but was always home by eight; so I sat down to spend the interval in reading. Eight o'clock came, but not Jessie. The shades of evening fell. Her mother was anxious, so I laid down my book and went out to meet her. I walked onward, seeking in vain to catch a glimpse of her in the distance, till I came within view of the loch. I saw several children on its banks, but Jessie was not amongst them. They were running along the edge of the water, as if looking for something they had lost, and as I came nearer, I heard one exclaiming, 'I see her now, she's drowning, she's drowning.' In an instant the impetus of dread was upon me—I rushed to the bank—I saw a little struggling arm disappear beneath the surface—I threw myself into the loch, and caught hold of the



floating hair of Jessie Medwyn, just as her beautiful body was sinking the last time, to rise no more with life. The loch was deep, and it cost me some trouble to regain the bank, careful as I was to keep the little maiden's head above water. When I had succeeded in extricating us both from the water, I sat down on the ground with the unconscious child in my arms, and gazed with fear into her pale face—so pale you would have thought the spirit had already taken its departure to the far land. She had not, however, been very long under water; she soon revived so far as to be able to speak, but continued weak and trembling from the effects of alarm. Her first words were, 'Do not take me to mamma till I get a little better.' 'I must take you, Jessie,' I said; 'you will get cold with these wet clothes.' So I lifted her in my arms, and she clasped her cold hands round my neck to support herself. Sometimes she said she felt stronger and able to walk, but I would not allow her till we came near to the house. Never did I descend the mountain paths so swiftly, and yet so carefully; we were home before it was quite dark. When Jessie's father and mother knew I had



saved their daughter's life, they could not find words to express their thanks; but in the mean time they had to attend to Jessie, and I also had to retire to put on dry clothing. When dressed, I went into the parlour, where I was quite alone, and seated myself on the sofa in delighted reflection on the events of the evening. Had I been but a few minutes later in going to the loch—had any trifling circumstance occurred by the way to detain me for a moment, Jessie, who had now become dearer to me than ever, and with whom I yet expected to enjoy many happy days, would have been dead in her early youth, and lost to earth for evermore. I was alone for some time in that room; a pleasing light was diffused through it from the mingling rays of the lamp on the table, and the latest streaks of day that glimmered through the folds of the window curtains, and the circumstances in which I found myself placed, were like the ideal visions of a happy dream. In devout gratitude I gave thanks to God for his mercy, and my soul was filled with the joy of heaven."

After a short interval, he again opened his note-book, and read the following entry, in relation to the morning of his departure from

his native country:—"How strange, how new, how indefinable were my feelings when I had quitted the house, and found myself alone in the open country that lay beyond our garden's enclosures. I felt as if—no, it is utterly impossible to describe the feelings of that hour. We may, perhaps, find words to convey any single idea or feeling, however powerful or however lovely, but when the light of many thoughts enters at once into the mind, like the sun's last rays amid the clouds of evening, the poet, as well as the painter, feels the utter insufficiency of his capabilities. When I reached Churchvale it was not yet the breakfast hour, so I left the highway, and stepped into a solitary green lane, where I had lately been with Jessie—

'For oh! more sweet

*It was* to ponder on thee, though unseen—

*It was* to wander where thy steps *had* been—

Than any other breathing form to meet.'

"The sun arose and dispelled the morning haze with the wand of beauty. Churchvale reposed peacefully beneath the morning beam. And was it possible that this was the very last time I should view that scene for years,

and that I should no longer meet the fairy form of that little one who was my daily and almost indispensable delight? But I would know she was alive and happy, and that would be enough.

‘ Her memory as a spell  
Of love comes o’er my mind—  
As dew upon the purple bell—  
As perfume on the wind—  
As music on the sea—  
As sunshine on the river ;  
So hath it always been to me,  
So shall it be for ever.’ ”

We all remember having gazed, in early youth, on the exquisite beauty of a summer’s evening, when we almost wrought our minds into the belief, that those skies, so bright, so pure, so quiet in their loveliness, could never more be overclouded ; and yet how often since then has the fury of the tempest been nursed on their bosom ! Thus, also, did Haldane remember the scenes of his former joy, their every charm being still livingly portrayed on his heart, though now adversity had blasted some of their fairest flowers. Oh, earth ! thou art a scene of perpetual change !—of smiles melted into tears, and tears wafted into smiles ! Why then can we permit any joy or any sorrow,

based on this world alone, to sink deep into our hearts? Both are soon removed by the operation of some hidden law in the moral government of the universe. The moon was now high in heaven—that same moon on which Haldane and Miss Medwyn had so often gazed together in deep delight, while her soft hand lay in his in confiding love, and the little Jessie gambolled around them in childhood's glee. And now as Haldane gazed alone on the beauteous orb, his feelings were much excited, and he produced almost spontaneously the following stanzas :—

## MELANCHOLY MOON.

Oh, lovely night,  
Thine aspect bright,  
Its purest light  
Is shedding round,  
On lake, and tower,  
In hall, and bower,  
And o'er the flower-indented ground.  
The moon, in those bright realms on high,  
Is sailing o'er a cloudless sky ;  
And Beauty, rising 'mid her beams,  
Flings over Earth her softest gleams :  
But grief, superlative, is mine,  
A high, though painful, boon ;—  
Thy smile is cold and sad to-night,  
O, melancholy moon !

From yon tall trees,  
The evening breeze  
Sad melodies  
    Is breathing round ;  
All else is still,  
And on the hill  
Is laid the midnight hush profound.  
    This is the place we used to roam,  
And yonder stands *her* happy home,  
And here is where our bower was made,  
Beneath that hawthorn's chequered shade :  
But now I am a wanderer,  
    Alone, upon this silent scene ;—  
The happiness of those bright days  
Is as it ne'er had been.

Yes orb of night,  
Another light,  
Than thine more bright,  
    Has passed away ;—  
Oh ! could I deem  
'Twere all a dream,  
And go to rest, beneath thy ray.  
    But no !—where is that form of grace—  
That noble brow—that beauteous face—  
That eye, like star-ray on a wave ?  
All *there*,—closed in that early grave.  
And thou, O moon ! that once beheld  
    Our young hearts' happy fervent glow,  
And taught the language of a smile,  
Now look'st upon my woe.



One little flower,  
With beauty's dower,  
Still kept thy bower  
    When thou wert gone,  
Resembling thee  
    So perfectly,  
With her I could not feel alone,  
And in her own sweet person too,  
New beauties daily burst to view;  
The bright'ning look, the bosom fair,  
So holily exempt from care!  
But now she too is fled from Earth,  
My only consolation left;  
I stand a recluse among men,  
Of all—of all bereft.

I've borne the strife  
Of human life,  
With ills so rife,  
    For many a day;  
But now 'tis done,  
The goal is won,  
The fragile frame must now give way;  
I feel decay fall on my heart,  
I feel that I shall now depart,—  
Like tortured shade on ocean's breast,  
When waves are high,—and be at rest.  
Farewell, O Earth! I go, I go!  
And in the midnight soon  
Thou'lt light up yet another grave,  
O melancholy moon!

The last vestige of day disappeared, and the moonbeams shone more brightly pure on the "field of death." A slight breeze arose, and murmured sadly in the scattered trees that stood around. The night air was cold and dewy, but it scared not away that lonely man from his solitary seat—he seemed as if bound to the spot by the fetters of a spell. We sometimes indulge in fond reveries, which, in their intensity seem almost real, and thus it was with Haldane at that hour. But his dream was not a fanciful representation of the future, but a true reflection of the past. He called to mind many joyful hours spent in company with Miss Medwyn and her little sister; the happy walks—the strolls by moonlight in the neighbouring garden, whose tall trees were now visible in the distance, and the odours of which came floating sensibly on the pinions of that evening breeze. Increasingly intense became that reverie, till, at length, he imagined his first-love was seated beside him on the tomb, and putting forth his arm to embrace her, the dull void brought back the sad conviction of her absence. "Where is she?" he internally asked, "where, where is her abode? as I am in existence, so

"Death could not noise her  
 to peace's vault. Is her spirit  
 still in you mes-  
 sengers dimly on the ear-  
 rands of heaven now hovering, though  
 the peace in the ambient air  
 is a peace of amiable tranquillity, or  
 is it a peace of deadly warfare? It may  
 be that the peace of heaven is every where."  
 The peace of heaven was increasing, and  
 the peace of earth was enjoying his strangely  
 peaceful and happy state. At least there  
 was a peace of amiable tranquillity  
 in the air, what seemed  
 to be a peace of heaven, and he wished  
 to be a part of that scene of life and  
 death, of peace and war, of tranquillity and im-  
 perturbability. His purpose he opened his  
 mouth to speak, and turned to an account  
 of the circumstances that occurred on the day  
 on which Miss Medwyn was buried.

"When the funeral was over, I returned  
 to Churchvale to spend the evening with that  
 melancholy family. I felt deeply for the  
 father and mother, but more deeply still for  
 Jessie. I knew that, although it was not her  
 nature to speak her feelings openly, she had

a delicate and intense perception of her loss. That night I expected that, owing to the trying circumstances in which she was placed, Jessie would throw off much of her usual reserve, and reveal her mind more clearly than she had formerly done to me ; and I was not disappointed. Before going into the house, I took a turn through the garden, and as I entered a narrow winding path that led up a slight ascent, I saw at a short distance before me the sweet little Jessie attired in her mourning robe, which gave strong relief to the snowy neck and shoulders that escaped from beneath its dark folds. She was leaning her head against a tree, and holding her handkerchief to her eyes ; for she wept. She seemed in deep thought, and observed me not till I had approached and laid my hand on her shoulder, saying, ‘ Jessie, why do I find you weeping ? ’ At first she seemed inclined to hide her emotion, but seeing I had already observed it, she wept freely, saying at the same time, ‘ Oh, Mr. Haldane, why should I not weep ? is not she who was my dearest friend, my very dearest—for mamma is not so often with me as Eliza was—gone away and left me ? Go where I will, I cannot find her ;

and at night I sleep alone, for now there is no Eliza to lie down beside me; the kind arms that used to clasp me, and the warm bosom on which I used to fall asleep, are there no longer; and when I think on the cold, cold place where they are now lying, it sets me a weeping again.' Jessie no longer wept alone; her words, and her voice, and her tears, were more than I could bear. I sat down on the mossy ground, and took Jessie on my knee. And now, when she saw I was weeping, she seemed to love me for her sister's sake, and struggled not, as usual, to free herself from my embrace. 'I am well pleased, Jessie, I said, 'to learn that you think often about Eliza, for this tells me that you loved her; but I must teach you to think about her very differently. I must not find you crying on account of your sister, and as for yourself, Jessie, you have kind friends still around you, and some of them love you better than you know. Eliza while in this world obeyed the impulse of good the Lord had implanted within her, and followed not blindly the evil propensities of human nature which war against true spiritual happiness; and from the observation of all the wonderful things



in this beautiful world, and from the study of the Scriptures, she learned to love that God who first loved her, and who is the Maker and Preserver, and Redeemer of man. And this love led her to renounce the vanities of the world, and to place her joy in goodness and in truth for ever; and, although while here she suffered much pain and many sorrows, she is now in heaven where that same God whom she loved, and who first loved her, shall Himself wipe away all tears from her eyes!

“I am not sure in how far Jessie understood this—the time for her to understand it fully was not yet come. After a short pause she spoke thus, while the tear still glistened in her eye:—‘No one walked with me so often as Eliza—no one ever talked to me so kindly—and no one spoke so sweetly of that happy home where good people go.’ ‘Weep not, Jessie,’ I replied, ‘your sister has already gone to that happy home, and if you continue the good girl you now are, you shall one day meet her there, never to be parted any more.’ Jessie wiped her eyes, and, looking up in my face with an expression of mingled joy and grief, said,—‘O, yes! we shall surely meet

again, but how long—how very long till the time come.' 'Such,' thought I, 'is the language of youth, when all things are in prospect, but the time is coming when that expression shall be changed into,—*How short*—*how very short*, when her view of life shall have become retrospective!'

While on the other side of the Atlantic, Haldane's path had been beset by many trials and temptations, and sometimes, too, had he fallen into the snares that were spread around him; yet ever would the remembrance of his little Jessie, and sometimes, too, the recollection, still fadeless, of her beloved sister, arise upon his spirit, and like voices from the season of youth and innocence, fill his soul with the soft hues of sweet repentance, and woo him back into paths of righteousness and peace.

While residing in America, Haldane was often in spirit at home, that is, at his native village, and at Churchvale! and in holy communion, not with the beloved companions of former days, but with the places only which the departed had hallowed. Many a scene of past joy became at times so vividly impressed on his imagination that, when he

closed his eyes on the present existing reality, it seemed as if they were, even then, visible before him. So vivid a picture of the scenes themselves, presented not only in their general aspect, but also in their *minutiæ*, could not long exist without a portraiture, more vivid still, of those faces and those forms which constituted their chief beauty; and when these arose before him, many a smile, or pressure of the hand, or word, or action, that had been already repeated a thousand times in fancy, was again remembered with unabated love. There are two things in this recital of Haldane's feelings that may seem strange to the reader, unaccustomed as he may be to read his lessons of human nature in the fashionable novels of the day. The first is, that so intense a love should continue for the dead; and the second, more strange still, that it should be a love of *two*. He loved those two, however, while living, but at different periods, and now, at the same time, while both were no more. But this was a love quite different in its nature from the ordinary affection of mortals. Haldane possessed no feelings that might not have belonged to other men of imaginative minds, had they been placed in similar circumstances.

His love was different indeed from the love of others, but circumstances alone had made it so; it was the same in depth, the same in purity, but not the same in hope of future bliss, or in present enjoyment. Like the love of others, it looked beyond the tomb, but it looked beyond the tomb alone, for *there* was its only resting-place. It was, therefore, if I may make the comparison without irreverence, more like the love of those who have already gone into that land where "there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage," than of those who are still sojourners on this unstable earth.

The deep solitude of that unfrequented churchyard brought down, even now, many a repentant thought on that young man's mind. He blessed God that he had still a heart capable of feeling the blessedness of pure joys, and he repeated half audibly a few verses of his favourite psalm—

"After thy loving-kindness, Lord,  
Have mercy upon me:  
For thy compassions great, blot out  
All mine iniquity.  
Me cleanse from sin, and thoroughly wash  
From mine iniquity:  
For my transgressions I confess;  
*My sin* I ever see."



Haldane closed his eyes and was once more with the past. And now his thoughts reverted to his first love, bringing to his mind her extreme beauty, even when the hand of death was upon her.

Jessie Medwyn ! Once in Haldane's mind, she was over all the future, as well as the past. Her influence was in every coming event, and her image in every coming scene which the imagination could conceive while revelling with enthusiasm in anticipated joy. When, amid the darkness of night and the autumnal tempests, the darkness within threatened to immerse his spirit in more interior and enduring shades, he bent his eye on that young human flower, and immediately it was morning in my soul. Happy, happy, blessed days, where are ye now ? But ye *were* once, and your remembrance *will be* for ever.

He recollected many of the conversations he had held with that lovely being whose ashes were now mouldering beneath him, especially the last they had enjoyed on earth, when she spoke so feelingly, because by experience, of spiritual joys. At this moment a breeze came rustling through the long grass that grew around the grave, and in it



there was mingled a tone like the voice of the departed. The breeze passed with its reedy music, but amid the deep ensuing stillness that tone was repeated! This time it was more distinct, and Haldane knew it was the sound of a female voice that came upon his ear; its intonation, too, seemed exactly that of the voice of the deceased Miss Medwyn. Haldane was not given to superstition; but in such a place, and under such circumstances, it was difficult to withstand its influence, and, as he unclosed his eyes, he almost expected to behold an inhabitant of the other world. And if his expectation was not indeed realized, what *did* he now behold? On the other side of a single tree that stood close at hand was seen a white object he had not before observed, lying on the ground and nearly hid in the long grass that grew around the monument of the father of the departed family. For some time it remained quite immoveable, but at length it moved, stood erect, and displayed the form of an elegant young lady, about the same size, but thinner than had once been Eliza Medwyn. It was more a feeling of holy awe than of terror, that filled Haldane's mind at this moment; he did not

attempt to retreat, but sat motionless, gazing in wonder on the beautiful apparition. It moved a few steps, looked up to the moon, and then leant its head against a neighbouring tree. For a moment he saw the face, and it was the face of Miss Medwyn the moonbeams revealed, a little paler and a little thinner than formerly, and with the same expression of meekness, and of love still more purified. Haldane knew not what to do, nor what to think, and, as the moonbeams fell softly around the beautiful bent form that leaned against the trunk of that tree, he believed he looked on the shade of the departed. Haldane, in his present excited state, could have borne it no longer—he was about to retreat towards the gates of the churchyard, when a rough terrestrial noise fell on his ear. A man rushed forth from a small clump of trees that grew at a little distance, and laid hold of the figure—cries of alarm immediately followed, and he now knew it was no vision that had scared him, but a girl of flesh and blood, and now in distress. Haldane rushed to her assistance; the villain threw her roughly on the ground, and stood over her to defend himself, and at the same time prevent the escape

of his prey. As they confronted each other, Haldane caught sight of the intruder's countenance—it was an ancient foe—one who had once pretended to love Miss Medwyn, and whose character Haldane had all along doubted. “Ha, Demunnick tremble, thou art at last unmasked.” As Haldane spoke, the other looked wildly in his face, and fled with a yell of terror, exclaiming, “The dead is risen—the dead is risen—who can withstand the dead?” “Thus, then,” thought Haldane, “the rumour of my decease has stood me in good stead at last,” for Demunnick was a powerful man, and might have had the best of the fray. Haldane could scarcely repress a laugh, as he saw him scampering away like a scared resurrectionist over the mossy tombs, but in less than a minute he had disappeared through a broken part of the fence; all was once more unbroken solitude, and there, on the cold ground, lay that terrified maiden, who, though no longer a spirit, was still to Haldane a being of mystery.

He stepped forward and lifted her gently from the ground. She had fainted, to judge from her extreme paleness, but was now so far recovered as to be able to stand, and,

in some measure, to comprehend the nature of her situation. "Madam," said Haldane, "the danger is passed, we are safe; could I do any thing further for you?" "Oh! Sir," she said faintly, "I cannot enough thank you for the good service you have already done me; you will, no doubt, think it strange to find a young woman here alone, and at so late an hour—yon house is my home, (pointing to Churchvale;) there is an opening in the hedge that leads into our garden, through which I ventured, a short time since, to visit my father's grave." Motionless stood Haldane, and gazed in silence on the speaker. He was in the shade, but the beams of the full moon fell unbroken over the face and form of the lovely virgin. "Is it," thought he, "my little Jessie in the beauty of her early womanhood that stands before me? Has her tender body been in reality brought forth from beneath the hulk of that huge vessel in life, and in undiminished loveliness? Is she whom I had believed long since removed to another state, still an inhabitant of my own world, and yet to be my companion in the days to come? But how can it be possible? With my own eyes I beheld the fatal event." She



seemed appalled and bewildered by the strange silence of her rescuer, and, at length, murmured softly, "Who art thou?" "Who art *thou*?" repeated Haldane, and again there was unbroken silence. At length she retreated a few steps and said timidly, "If thou wert he whose voice your own so much resembles, but who now lies lifeless beneath the waves of ocean, you would not thus trifle with an unprotected girl." "The rumour was false—he was saved by the providence of the Lord." "Oh! is it possible? and do you know him?" "Yes, but he believed you dead long ago—your death seemed certain." "Oh! who speaks?—my death, certain—yes—but that same providence saved me." Haldane could bear it no longer, and, endeavouring to repress the unfamiliar tone his voice had acquired during his absence in foreign parts, he said "Jessie." She started—she sought support from a tree—Haldane turned towards her—the moon shone unshaded on his face—the next moment they were in each other's arms. Their former intimacy—the quick memory of many a happy hour—their long absence—their belief in each other's decease—the strangeness of their meeting—



rendered such an embrace natural, even without the aid of love. But the feelings that overflowed Haldane's soul at this hour are beyond the power of words to tell. He would have clasped her in his arms—he would have pressed her to his heart—he would have spoken to her as he used to do in the happy past, and mentioned many a little circumstance that was still dwelling on his memory—but he remembered that since they had parted, a great change had passed over her—that she was almost a different being—that now she thought and acted for herself—that, in short, she was no longer a child, but a woman. It was necessary that a new acquaintance should be formed between them. "Perhaps," thought he, "I who was once her most intimate friend, and the most frequent visitor at Churchvale, may now be received as a stranger who has no claim of love."—The sequel happily dissipated those sad surmises.

When the first flash of surprise was over, the lovers, (as they may truly be called) retreated from the grave scene, and it was the arm of Jessie Medwyn, whose gentle pressure Haldane now felt! They soon reached the opening in the hedge, and passed into the

garden of Churchvale. Haldane wished to have some conversation with Jessie before entering the house. He asked her to walk round the garden. She agreed readily, and as they visited the scenes of other days, each gave a rapid account of the circumstances of that long dreary interval; for it had proven a time of trial unto both. "Oh, Jessie," Haldane began, and then interrupting himself he said smilingly, "if I may now call you Jessie, for you are changed since last we met—you are not now the little girl that was once so fond of fishing and *drowning* in a loch." The remembrance seemed to touch her feelings. She replied, "If you might not call me Jessie, I were changed indeed." "And have not I then been forgotten at Churchvale during my long absence?" "No, no! and you never would have been forgotten had we seen you no more. Before father's death, which happened only two months ago, my mother and he used often to speak of you, and then they remembered Eliza."

At that name they were both, for a few moments, silent, for they were just passing the bower which was called Eliza's bower,

and in which they had often been in company with the departed. "How could we forget you," Jessie continued, "unless we had forgotten Eliza also? No, we were not forgetful—though forgotten." The two last words were spoken softly, but with a reproving and almost melancholy tone. Haldane, however, had an excuse to make which was a good one, and at the same time a true.—"Oh, Jessie, you now know the cause of my seeming forgetfulness. I beheld that fatal accident that occurred at my embarkation. From the distance at which I viewed it there seemed to be no hope—I thought you were amongst the dead. Oh! if you knew how much I suffered for your sake!—but tell me, how was it that you escaped?" "Very simply, and yet how providentially! I had gone behind the vessel to look whether the shower was nearly over, and was but a single step beyond its reach when the sudden and destructive event took place." "And William Demunnick?—the danger from which I have this night been the happy means of rescuing you?" This Haldane said inquiringly, and from Jessie's reply, he could learn that Demunnick had but lately resumed his visits at Churchvale,

and that on the last occasion he had made certain proposals to herself which had been coldly repulsed. They continued their walk through the winding avenues of that lovely garden beneath the calm light of a summer's moon; and their conversation was sweetly retrospective, such as is the delight of loving hearts. They playfully tried to vie each other in recalling the past, and in remembering circumstances which, though altogether unimportant when viewed in themselves, are beautiful exceedingly in the colouring of love. Before leaving the garden they rested for a few moments in a leafy bower where Haldane had conversed with Eliza, a short time before her death, on the subject of another life. The soft languor of autumn was over all things, and heaps of fallen leaves lay rustling beneath their feet. Haldane's heart, like the season, was full to overflowing, and, putting his arm round the delicate form of the lovely girl that sat beside him—sweet picture of the departed!—and, taking her soft hand in his, he thus addressed her—"Jessie, I love you—I will always love you—for Eliza's sake, for your own sake, and for the sake of all the happy days I have enjoyed at Churchvale,



and, if you do not love me, yet will I love you—for ever.” Jessie answered with a smile and a look that said, “yes, we will indeed be friends for ever,” at the same time leaning her head familiarly on her dear friend’s shoulders, in the truth and purity of her affection, for their intimacy had been long, and it was more like the intimacy of brother and sister than of lovers. “I know,” continued Haldane, “that we shall love each other for ever—our minds are congenial—we are happy in one another’s presence. Might we not then live together so as never more to be separated? Would you not be mine, Jessie?” She lifted her head from its resting-place, but took not away the hand he still held in his. Haldane felt she was agitated—she spoke almost in a whisper, and yet distinctly he heard the few words that fell from her lips, “No, no, that can never be.” Haldane was much hurt, but, by a strong effort, suppressing his feelings, he replied—“Well, I see I have expected too much, some younger and perhaps worthier man has already engaged your affections.” “Never, never, never,” she passionately exclaimed, “Oh! can you believe it possible I should form new ties?—



you know not how dear to me is the past ! All the affections of my heart have been devoted to my parents, to Eliza, and—to you. I could not think of Eliza without thinking of you at the same time—therefore, you have been often, very often present to my thoughts; and I could not think of the days of my childhood without remembering you, for I saw you oftener than any other friend; you joined with me in my childish sports more than any other friend; you made me a companion at an age when my conversation was more likely to be troublesome than agreeable to you, and now ——” “And now,” said Haldane, interrupting her, “I want you to be my companion still, and you will not; dear Jessie, why is it so? You liked me in your childhood, when, as you say, you had little wisdom; but now when you are wise you have discovered that I am unworthy of you.” “I am not guilty of so base a thought.” “Then why will you not be mine?” “Because I love—I mean, I respect you too much to allow you to make such a sacrifice; you have not heard that my father’s affairs were left in an unsettled state—they are more so than was at first known—our debts are great

—Churchvale is to be sold—my childhood's home is dear to me, very dear—I am sorry, sorry to leave it." They were both silent. Jessie wept, and Haldane wiped away the falling tear. He had not known the Medwyn's fortunes were so low, but he could not grieve, for he knew that he had the power to aid them. "And how," continued Jessie, "could I leave my mother? I am the only one she has now left to care for her—she will need all my assistance. And as for myself, I am unworthy of you—I am too young, and too inexperienced—I know it is for my own good alone that you would marry me." "Jessie, dearest Jessie, I have met with many a fair girl I might have called my own, but having known you so well, I could think of no other. Riches and high life, and even beauty, are nothing to me without love. I could not love *a stranger*; but my heart is open to those with whom I have oftenest been, and with whom I have most in common. It is not enough that I should be with my love in the future only; I must also have been with her in the past; to have no past to diversify our conversation, and to furnish our thoughts, would indeed be an insuperable

want. Unless it be to you, Jessie, I shall never be married." Jessie was silent. She seemed to listen to the music of the wind that murmured sadly in the foliage of the bower. The moon at that moment came from behind a small cloud that had formerly obscured her light. Jessie gazed into heaven, and a shade of melancholy was on her face. Haldane had never seen her look so lovely; her countenance seemed not of flesh and blood—one would have thought it was the visible soul he gazed upon. "No," she said at length, "at present at least it cannot be; there is, perhaps, another reason, but I will not speak of *it* to-night. I do not think that *other reason* exists, but I am not yet sure," and she sighed deeply. "What can it be?" said Haldane; "but I will not inquire if you will only reply in the affirmative to this question. You said you thought that circumstance did not exist; if so, when the breath of another spring is on the earth, may I call you mine?" Jessie was silent and Haldane was happy. "Now then," said he, "we are each other's, and love is to us a free theme, and a holy theme, and a theme that shall endure for ever and ever." They were both strongly excited, and, after a

pause, Haldane sought relief by saying—  
“ You seem in love with that book, Jessie, you hold in your hand ; will you let me see the title ? we will read it by moonlight.”  
“ Do you know it ? ” she said. “ Yes ; would you like to know the author, Jessie ? ”  
“ I have often wished it, but knew it was vain ; how could I expect an introduction to such as he ? ” “ I am he.” At these words, Haldane’s very appearance seemed changed ; to the fair eyes that now gazed on him, he became suddenly more noble, and more august in aspect, for that book which Jessie carried in her hand, and of which Haldane was the author, was an anonymous work of great celebrity, and one, too, the perusal of which had afforded Jessie the most exquisite delight. For an instant she doubted, and then perceiving that Haldane was serious, she exclaimed—“ Thou art *he*—and *thou art mine*,” and dropped on his bosom, shedding tears of pure joy. It was a moment of intense delight—a concentration of all happiness, and a consummation of all hope. “ It is of the Lord’s mercy,” said Haldane, “ we enjoy this hour, let us praise his name.” They knelt together in the arbour, and rendered thanks



to the Giver of all good. They arose in deep joy, and left the moonlit bower. It was late, the dews were falling, a few minutes more and they stood arm in arm before the lonely widow. She gazed at Haldane with surprise, if not alarm. From her daughter's eagerness, however, she soon learned it was no spirit, but Edward Haldane, her dear child's early and best friend, that stood before her, and as she embraced him that night, she smiled her first smile since the day of her husband's death. It was a happy night. Haldane poured forth a full confession of his love. Mrs. Medwyn told how Jessie had wept when she was informed of his being lost at sea, Jessie's *reasons* were all removed, and each felt that the existence of the other was indeed necessary both for present and for future happiness.

THE END.







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